Et sic in antiquissimis codicibus inueniunt bis C *scriptum, quomodo, vt apud Terentium in Andria,—*

Hoccine est credibile aut memorabile.'*

*xii, vi, 25. *The verse of the 'Andria' quoted by Priscian is* vi, i, 1.

THE Italians, according to their excellent custom, make C soft, and as if the syllable in which it stands were written with the aspirate H, both in Latin and in their vernacular. And this only before the two vowels E and I, & before the diphthong AE in Latin. They write, *Ma done Felice a vna cicatrice,* and say, 'Ma done Feliche a vna chicatriche.' In Latin, they write *Cæsar, Celius* and *Cicero,* and pronounce, 'Chæsar,' 'Chelius,' and 'Chichero.' Which thing we do not follow either in our pronunciation of the French tongue, or of the Latin. But the Picards are much addicted to it in many words of their dialect. As when they mean to say *Cela* and *Cecy,* they say, 'Chela' and 'Chechy,' as if there were in the spelling an aspirate H before the vowel E and before I [Y]. On the contrary, where the true Frenchman both writes & pronounces the aspirate before A and O, as in 'Chanoine' & 'Chose,' the Picard says 'Canon' and 'Cose.' The Frenchman says 'vng Chien,' 'vng Chat,' and 'vne Mouche,' and the Picard, 'vng Quien,' 'vng Cat,' & 'vne Mouque.' The Picard pronounces C before V [U] as we do, in saying, 'Cuydez vous que ie soye Crapot deau?' without giving the sound of the aspirate. But he says, 'De chu monde,' both writing and pronouncing the aspirate H before the V. In Latin he pronounces the C better than we, for he makes it thick, & as if aspirated; but he does not write it with the aspirate. He says 'Amiche,' and 'Sochie,' and 'Chichero erat pater eloquentiæ;' but he writes 'Amice,' 'Socie,' 'Cicero erat pater eloquentiæ.'

Alone among all the people of France the Picard pronounces the C very well. And the better to prove it, and because of the quaintness of the language and the pronunciation, and the divine talent of the Picard writer & poet who made it, I will here quote & set down an epitaph in the Picard tongue, wherein methinks you will find a certain grace.

An ancient Epitaph in the Picard tongue, which may be seen, as I have been told, in the great cemetery of Saint Denis in the noble city of Amiens.

Soubz moy pierre
Chi gist Pierre
De Machy
Quon a chi
Mort boute
Se bonte
Dieu luy sache
Veoir en fache
Sespousee
Est posee
Chi empres
Qui apres
Trespassa
Et passa
De chu monde
Dieu la munde.
Tant vesquirent
Quilz acquirent
Vnze enfans,
Bruns, blondz, blancs.
Or sont morts
Tous ches corps
Qui porissent
Vers norissent
Et attendent
Quilz reprendent
Soubz chez lames
Corps et ames
Pour aller
Et voler
Es saincts chieux
Che doint Dieux.
Amen.

I have written the aspirate H in the words of this Epitaph, to show how the Picard pronounces C soft before E and I, as the Italians do.

C Alone among the Mutes has this quality, that it makes the vowel which precedes it in a Latin syllable long in metrical quantity: as in *hoc, hac, sic,* and *hic* when it is an adverb; for, when it is a pronoun, it may be short, as at the end of the sixth book of the *Æneid* of Virgil, where he wrote:—

Hic vir hic est, tibi quem promitti sæpius audis.

C Before O, in pronouncing French, is sometimes hard, as in *Coquin, Coquard, Coq, Coquillard;* & sometimes soft, as in *Garcon, Macon, Facon, Francois,* and other like words.

SOme persons make the C as if it were an O cut through the curve on the right, without spreading it; but, as I have seen this letter in Rome, in very old manuscripts, I open it out below, giving it a graceful tail, which imparts charm and spirit.